



## ***AOT in Action***

### ***TOURISM WORKS FOR ARIZONA!***

Welcome to AOT in Action, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

#### **A Message from the Director:**

Good afternoon.

This week, we are releasing one of our most valuable tourism resources, the 2008 Official State Visitors Guide (OSVG). This Guide captures the imagination of travelers, and encourages them to discover Arizona's vibrant destinations.

Designed in a magazine format, the 2008 Guide features stories written by professional travel writers about the unique experiences visitors can find in Arizona. This format helps readers discover the state's unexpectedly exhilarating signature scenery, endless opportunities, open-air lifestyle and timeless discoveries. In addition, themed sections throughout the Guide feature information on statewide events, sightseeing opportunities, outdoor activities, art showings and culinary experiences. The accompanying map includes valuable travel and tourist information, including a detailed listing of campgrounds and recreational areas, information on the state's Native American lands, a listing of Arizona's designated Scenic Roads and travel tips for each of the states regions.

The Guide is available for online viewing at [www.Arizonaguide.com](http://www.Arizonaguide.com). To obtain a complimentary copy of the Official State Visitor's Guide, log on to [www.Arizonaguide.com](http://www.Arizonaguide.com) or call the Arizona Office of Tourism at (866) 298-3312.

Have a great week.

*Margie R. Emmenau*

Margie A. Emmermann  
Director  
Arizona Office of Tourism

## AOT News Flash

### AOT's Research Section has been Updated

The following items have been updated in the Research and Statistics section of AOT's business-to-business Web site [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

- State Park Visitation January 2008
- State Park Visitation 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2007
- State Park Visitation Year End 2007

For additional information or questions, please contact Beth Billings, Research Specialist, at 602-364-3689 or via e-mail at [bbillings@azot.gov](mailto:bbillings@azot.gov).

### AOT's TEAM Grant Guidelines Have Been Posted!

The FY09 TEAM grant guidelines are now available. To download a copy of the guidelines please visit [www.azot.gov](http://www.azot.gov).

For FY09, AOT is encouraging TEAM applicants to develop strategic and innovative projects by providing a direct incentive of up to \$5,000 (no matching funds required), for projects that incorporate one of the following AOT initiatives: Branding, Arizona Origins or Go Green. Please read the FY09 TEAM Guidelines for specific information regarding eligibility for this new initiative.

FY09 TEAM grant applications must be received at the AOT office no later than 5:00 p.m. **Friday, April 18, 2008.**

FY09 TEAM grant applicants will be required to attend the TEAM workshop scheduled on March 14, 2008. However, for FY09 a new program feature will be offered to communities and organizations that participated and received TEAM funding during FY08. An online test will allow applicants to access and complete an interactive test and become TEAM qualified without attending the workshop. Applicants must receive a score of 75 percent or higher on the test in order to pass. Each applicant will have two opportunities to take and pass the test, if the score of 75 percent is not achieved, the applicant will be required to attend the TEAM workshop. The FY09 TEAM Online Test will be available February 11, 2008 through February 29, 2008. **The online test is only open to FY08 TEAM recipients;** all other TEAM grant applicants must attend the workshop on March 14, 2008. If you have questions or need additional information regarding the FY09 TEAM grant program please contact Glenn Schlottman at 602-364-3727 or [gschlottman@azot.gov](mailto:gschlottman@azot.gov).

TEAM Workshop  
March 14, 2008  
10 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.  
Tempe Center for the Arts

700 W. Rio Salado Parkway  
Tempe, AZ 85281

## Industry News

### TIA: International Visitors Still Trail Pre-9/11 Levels

The number of international travelers to the U.S. grew last year but is still below pre-9/11 levels, the Travel Industry Association said Thursday. Commerce Department estimates show the number of overseas visitors grew to 23.2 million last year, up from 21.7 million in 2006. But the number is still 11 percent below the 26 million arriving in 2000, said Roger Dow, president and CEO of TIA. Dow said the U.S. would have had 10 million more international visitors last year if it had kept pace with the upward trend of international travelers visiting other countries. "The United States has a serious problem that deserves serious attention in Congress," Dow said. "We need change; it's time to put the welcome mat at America's front door." Dow used the Washington briefing to renew TIA's support for passage of the Travel Promotion Act that would help market the U.S. through an international marketing campaign that would be funded by private industry and a fee from visitors from visa waiver countries. Some 40 senators and 160 House members have signed up as co-sponsors of the legislation. (*A TA Special Report; [www.HonoluluAdvertiser.com/Business](http://www.HonoluluAdvertiser.com/Business)*)

### Spring Breakers Advised Not to Forget Passport

The State Department is advising students making a spring break pilgrimage to resorts in Mexico, the Caribbean and elsewhere to apply for passports, which are now required for everyone traveling in and out of the U.S. by air. In its annual guide for spring breakers, the department puts the passport requirement first among numerous pieces of advice for the beachbound, ahead of warnings on drugs and alcohol, sexual assault, robbery and poor road conditions. (*Page 3A, USA Today*)

### Next Up: Travel 2.0.

Those who prefer "Twittering" to talking on their cell phones, have more friends on Facebook than in real life and wouldn't dream of booking a hotel without first consulting TripAdvisor, probably understand all the fuss about the next generation of Web sites, commonly referred to as Web 2.0. But for those who don't, National Geographic Traveler advises hang on to your mouse, because things are about to get interesting for everyone, not just those who are digitally enlightened. Twitter, Facebook and TripAdvisor are just a few of the many new applications that could fundamentally change travel, says the magazine. "The real promise of Web 2.0 is that people who don't know each other can share travel information and updates in real time, in ways that benefit them right before--or during--their travels," says James A. Martin, a blogger on portable technology and travel. Practically speaking, the new wave of travel sites should help people navigate their way through traffic, get updates about airport delays and track down other like-minded souls. (*Page 14, National Geographic Traveler, March*)